

**CIRCUIT 7
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF VOLUSIA, FLAGLER, PUTNAM & ST. JOHNS COUNTIES

Calvin Martin, Chair

**Government Services Building
1769 East Moody Boulevard
Building 2
Bunnell, Florida**

April 19, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT:

**Andy Burnett
Mary Garcia
Deb Reith
Dan Merrithew
Ben Coney
Calvin Martin
Carl Coalson
Christine Sikorah - Alternate
Dianne Martin-Morgan
Sandra Felecia**

GUESTS AND STAFF PRESENT:

**Linda Mandizha - DCF
James Lynam - DCF
Michaelyn Pitts - DCF
Chris Massey - DJJ
Karin Flositz – CPC
Clay LaRoche – DCF
Dusty Pye - LSF
Michael Forster - FIP
Joe Theobold – Putnam Schools
Julia Marshall - DCF
Donna Koucinsky - Camelot
Dawn Green – DCF
Evelyn Lynam - DCF
Wendy Hinton – SAMH
Angie Pye - DAC
Dennis Manejo – SAYS
Fred Baker – SAYS
Schuyler Siefker - SAYS**

The mission of the department is to protect the vulnerable, promote strong and economically self-sufficient families, and advance personal and family recovery and resiliency in conjunction with

The mission of the Community Alliance is to support a comprehensive continuum of services to strengthen children and families through advocacy, education assessment and forging community collaboration with organizations and individuals that share the vision and mission of the Community Alliance.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m. Roll call did not establish a quorum.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were not approved due to failure to have a quorum.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation

IV. DOMESTIC ABUSE COUNCIL – CHILD WELFARE PILOT PROGRAM

Angie Pye reported:

- Ms. Pye discussed the child welfare pilot program. The goal was to reduce the number of sheltered children and have children placed with the mother (victim) and relatives. This was accomplished by having a domestic violence (DV) advocate collocated with the DCF investigators and assist with safety planning. The Attorney General is now funding this effort statewide. 36 of 42 DV organization have advocates collocated with DCF. In Volusia County there is a DV advocate located in east Volusia and west Volusia. There is one advocate located with DCF in Putnam County. The advocates now also work with the community based care agencies and are involved through the life of the case. She went on to discuss the impacts of this program and how they work with the perpetrators. She stated that the program has evolved and is continuing to evolve as they learn from their actions.
- Member Felecia asked Ms. Pye what sorts of follow-up services the DV advocates offer reunified families. Ms. Pye responded that the advocates can remain involved with the families especially if they remain in shelter. Our services are voluntary and we are available if the family wants or needs us.
- Member Coney asked, from a numbers perspective, how significant is the DV problem. Ms. Pye responded that she did not have the child welfare numbers at hand but that there were 4,500 law enforcement cases last year in Volusia County. DV is one of the two highest causes of child abuse reports in Circuit 7. She went on to discuss how they view success in DV cases.
- Chair Martin asked if there is a way to remove the “pilot” nomenclature from the program and is funding ongoing. Ms. Pye replied that she did think this would happen. Each year the program has been expanded and there are plans to continue planning to expand this effort.

V. MANAGING ENTITY UPDATE

Dusty Pye reported:

- Mr. Pye discussed LSF efforts with the legislature. Currently funding looks to be an issue.
- Mr. Pye discussed the review of expenditures and the potential to move lapsed dollars to areas of need. There is enough history now to make good decisions on where to shift dollars.
- Mr. Pye discussed care coordination where the ME looks at the process for clients that have recidivism with SAMH services. The ME is analyzing why there is a high rate of recidivism and has found that often we do the same thing for a client over and over with no better result. We are looking at specific counter measures that are different such as changes in doctors or provide transportation to specific services. This has been successful and with fewer funds from the legislature it is important to better use the funds we have.

- Mr. Pye discussed the SAMH and child welfare service integration. The question becomes “are the clients getting what they need”. Our meetings have produced some interesting findings and we are about half done with this project.
- Chair Martin asked about Executive Order 15175 and the coordination of SAMH, DCF and DOC actions and what ramifications it may have. Mr. Pye responded that negotiations are underway on a grant and if successful could result in 40 million dollars in additional funding to serve DOC clients especially after release from prison. The grant will not be decided until March 2018.

VI. COMMUNITY BASED CARE

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN (CPC) – Karin Flositz reported:

- Ms. Flositz spoke about the increase in the number of children in out-of-home care in the past two years. She noted that there has been a slight decrease lately. Due to intensified efforts in front end services there has been a 30 % decrease in shelters. This is very welcome news.
- Ms. Flositz stated that CPC has added Florida Baptist Children’s Home as a provider which will add a very active provider to our foster home system of care. They have already recruited six new foster homes in Putnam County. We now have a total of 210 foster homes. We have foster parent training classes running constantly to increase our capacity. Ms. Flositz discussed CPC’s adoption efforts and that this year they will finalize more adoptions than ever before. As of today, we have 172 adoptions and anticipate exceeding 200 for the fiscal year.
- She went on to discuss CPC’s turnover rate. She discussed the barriers to keeping staff on board and what CPC is doing to overcome them. She also announced to the Alliance that CPC was approved to access the risk pool which was important financial news for CPC. Counter measures taken this year should keep next fiscal year in better financial shape and eliminate the need to access the risk pool.
- Member Felecia asked if CPC has taken measures with local schools and colleges to improve the retention of millennial staff. Ms. Flositz replied that CPC has established a strong relationship with the colleges and is working through the internship programs to address this issue. We have also improved our interviewing techniques and our training to improve retention.
- Member Coalson asked if CPC is doing compassion fatigue training. Ms. Flositz replied that they are. The supervisors have already been trained and now we are training case workers unit by unit. She outlined additional measures that CPC has taken to combat compassion fatigue. There was extensive conversation on millennial employees and their views of the work place versus those of us who are older.

FAMILY INTEGRITY PROGRAM (FIP) – Michael Forster reported:

- Mr. Forster discussed the staff retention at FIP. He stated that they had two staff leave in the last quarter. What they found was that their staff was leaving for promotion or positions in the same field.
- Me. Forster stated that they have had 47 children leave out-of-home care. This was about a 25% reduction which for FIP is an excellent achievement. FIP has exceeded their goal for adoptions and have 34 adoptions YTD.

➤ Chair Martin asked about issues with the court docket and if they are being addressed in local meetings with the judge. Mr. Forster responded that we meet quarterly and these issues are being addressed. It has been suggested to bring on some senior judges to assist with work load but it has not happened. Trials are often set five or six months out. Chair Martin noted that this extends the time a child may have to spend in foster care. Chair Martin opined this has not been an historical problem in St. Johns County and with the judge aware of the issue hopefully this will be a short term problem.

VII. PROGRAM UPDATES

ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY – Dawn Green reported:

- Ms. Green discussed staff turnover and millennial employee issues. She stated that ESS has training to address millennial issues in May. The primary issue for ESS staff is too much work and too little payroll. She discussed the new “Glide Path” pay program. There is great hope this will improve the situation.
- Chair Martin noted that ESS, despite the turnover issues is still meeting their performance milestones. Ms. Green noted that those employees that do stay are tenacious about their jobs and what they do.

ADULT SERVICES – Michaelyn Pitts reported:

- Ms. Pitts discussed the new Adult Services redesign which changes how the Department handles immediate calls. Immediate calls used to require a three hour response time and that has now changed to 16 hours. This has been working very smoothly and has reduced overtime.
- Ms. Pitts discussed staff turnover in Adult Services. The issue of millennial staff does not affect Adult Services as much as the other programs. Many of our new hires are older workers and do not share the millennial values. The problem for our staff is workload and that seems to drive resignations.
- Also, she stated the lack of emergency placement continues to be a problem that seems to cycle back. We must use the hospitals for emergency placement and that will go well for a few months and then suddenly becomes a problem again.
- Chair Martin noted the lack of emergency placements as an issue in the report and asked if it is a significant issue. Ms. Pitts responded that it is significant because when we find a client not capable of caring for themselves, it then is unsafe to leave them in their home. Without any relatives available, the only place we have to take them is the hospital. We have been trying to work with the hospitals but often we have an influx of clients and then the hospitals become resistant to taking the clients. The hospital’s position is if they do not have a medical condition that needs treating then they do not belong in the hospital.
- Member Coney asked Ms. Pitts to define the vulnerable adult population. Ms. Pitts explained the criteria.
- Chair Martin suggested that we have some Alliance members that have strong connections with the hospitals. He asked if Ms. Pitts would like them to approach the hospitals on this issue. Ms. Pitts declined the offer at this time preferring to discuss it with her Program Administrator before asking the Alliance to act.
- Member Felecia asked how long of a stay do you anticipate for clients in the hospital. Ms. Pitts responded that it depends on having a vacant bed and if the client has sources of funding. She stated that sometimes it may be a day or could be as long as a month.

FAMILY SAFETY – Linda Mandizha reported:

- Ms. Mandizha spoke about turnover with Family Safety in Circuit 7. She stated that the last quarter had only a 2.8% turnover rate and the previous had just over a 3% turnover rates. These rates are excellent and a large improvement over last year. She went on to discuss the activities the Department has employed to improve the turnover rate.
- Ms. Mandizha spoke to the supervisor proficiency testing that is 63% complete. None of the supervisors that have taken the tests have failed it two times which would require a corrective action plan for that supervisor. This success rate is one of the highest in the state.
- Ms. Mandizha noted that out-of-home care numbers are down and noted that this was collaborative effort to achieve this end. She specifically wanted to recognize Ms. Karin Flositz of CPC for her efforts in Putnam County and the great results that have been achieved there. She also recognized James Lynam for his support with mental health issues and Carl Coalson for his trauma training provided to the CPIs.
- Chair Martin noted that the Family Safety report was very positive this quarter. He also noted the intensive effort in Putnam County and how well received it has been in the community.

SYSTEM OF CARE – Evelyn Lynam reported:

- Ms. Lynam discussed Executive order 175. She discussed that the intent is for all the agencies to work together on behalf of transitional youth. She introduced St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS) as the new provider for SOC.
- Mr. Fred Baker of SAYS addressed the Alliance. He described the new “Coaches” program to the Alliance.
- Ms. Lynam talked about the history of SOC and some of the accomplishments they have had over the past three years.

VIII. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

- Chair Martin wanted to note that Mr. Anderson is no longer with the Department. The Department is currently in the process of selecting a new Community Development Administrator. It is anticipated that this position will be filled by early summer.

IX. MEMBER COMMENTS

- Member Garcia noted that April 26 is National Denim Day supporting sexual assault awareness. On April 27 we will have an open house at the Child Advocacy Center to support victims of sexual assault.
- Member Felecia passed out packets detailing the “Christmas to Remember” toy drive for Flagler County foster children and how to get involved. She also discussed the upcoming A Team Camp this summer.
- Member Coalson introduced Andy Burnett, the new Putnam County Schools representative for the Alliance.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Joyce Case of the Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida addressed the Alliance regarding the Affordable Care Act and the new rules for enrollment. She discussed a number of changes with the Affordable Care Act. Clay LaRoche was assigned to secure flyers regarding the changes and to distribute those to the Alliance members.

- Dennis Manejo of SAYS stated that April is Child Abuse Prevention month and wanted everyone to know that they were having a march and pin wheel parade around their campus on April 27. He invited everyone to participate.

- James Lynam of DCF wanted to recognize Ms. Wendy Hinton as a strong proponent of SAMH services in our circuit.

XI. ADJOURN

With nothing further to come before the Alliance, Chair Martin adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.